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AUTHOR Gorton, Dick
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ABSTRACT

This document reports on a study that investigated the relation between the secondary principal's instructional expertise -- as perceived by the classroom teacher -- and the likelihood that a teacher with an instructional problem would seek the principal's assistance. The major conclusions were: (1) perceived expertise is the most important variable in determining the likelihood that a teacher will seek the assistance of another individual, whether that person is principal, department head, teaching colleague, or member of central office staff; (2) of the four potential sources of instructional leadership, teachers perceived the principal as possessing the least degree of expertise for helping with instructional problems; and (3) as a result of these findings, the principal may need to redefine his role responsibilities. (Author/LLR)

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THE IMPORTANCE OF ADMINISTRATOR EXPERTISE IN INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP

Dick Gorton
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

The primary purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between the secondary principal's instructional expertise, as perceived by the classroom teacher, and the likelihood that a teacher with an instructional problem would seek the assistance of the principal.

Traditionally, most principals have assumed that an important, if not the major function of their position is to provide instructional leadership.[1] A study by Horowitz and his associates reveals that principals continue to place a high priority on their role as an instructional leader.[2] Buttressing this view is a 1970 position paper sponsored by the National Association of Secondary School Principals which states:

> "The principal is an educational administrator, with all that the term implies. His major responsibility should be -- in cooperation with his staff -- to direct, guide, and coordinate the total educational program within the school.
>
> "His cardinal function is the improvement of instruction, which will enhance the learning experiences of his students. The principal then, is first and foremost an instructional leader: all his other activities must directly support this central function, or else he jeopardizes his raison d'etre."[3]

Thus, the principal is seen as an instructional leader by those who occupy the position and by those who are organizationally responsible for his role definition.

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The Problem

There is growing educational opinion, however, supported by accumulating research, that teachers, the main recipients of the principal's instructional leadership, do not recognize the principal as the instructional leader of the school. Campbell, for example, indicates that "the educational administrator is working with professionals who feel, often rightly, that they know more about teaching and learning than he does."[4] Erikson states that "with the influx of additional personnel, there is a tendency to look beyond the principal for help with classroom problems to persons such as colleagues, subject matter specialists, supervisors, and professors."[5] Goldman maintains that "those who are now principals and those who aspire to the principalship in the future had best become accustomed to the fact that there is no longer any possibility of their serving as instructional leaders, a role declared by every principal to be his goal, and which so few have ever attained."[6]

Several studies on the role of the principal as an instructional leader would appear to support the point of view described above. For instance, Clear asked social studies teachers whom they would normally approach first for assistance when they encountered an instructional problem. No teacher listed the principal. Most identified their own colleagues, followed by the department head, as the individual whom they would approach first if they encountered an instructional problem.[7]

Marquit, in another study, found that teachers saw the principal as significantly less effective in improving instruction than the principals saw themselves.[8] The principals tended to perceive themselves as effective instructional leaders; the teachers did not concur. Other studies by Dow and Gage,[9] Corwin,[10] and Sharma[11] indicated a lack of teacher acceptance of the principal's role as an instructional leader.

Apparently the main problem which the principal faces is that his leadership is no longer based on an expertise differential.[12] Most teachers are now as well as, if not better prepared in subject matter and teaching methodology than the principal. As Ball suggests, "they [the teachers] know their subject matter, they know how to teach, they know a great deal about pupil behavior and motivation, and are in the best sense of the term, professionals. Many teachers today know a good deal more about their own jobs than even the best principal can, and it's been a long time coming for principals to recognize this fact."[13] Consequently, teachers have become more militant in their expectations for professional autonomy and are less receptive to attempts by the principal to exercise instructional leadership.[14] Their attitude is characteristic of the problems with which any administrator must cope if he tries to exercise leadership over professionals without expertise as a source of his leadership.[15]

If the principal then, is to effectively exercise instructional leadership, it would appear that he must possess special instructional knowledge or skills. Although it should be noted that certain observers have taken the position that it is unlikely that the principal can obtain the necessary expertise in order to function as an instructional leader,[16] the question of whether the principal can effectively exercise instructional leadership <u>if</u> he possesses the appropriate special knowledge and skills has not yet been emperically resolved, and therefore remains a legitimate area for investigation.

Expertise, of course, has long been recognized as one of the bases for leadership in a social or bureaucratic organization,[17] and research conducted in non-educational settings has generally established its importance,[18] although there have been exceptions.[19] Studies in educational contexts, however, have been few in number and the results have been mixed. Although Horstein found

that teachers' satisfaction was related to their perception of the principal as an expert rather than just an authority figure,[20] Clear found no significant difference between the principal (representing authority of position) and the department head (representing authority of expertise) in influencing teacher behavior.[21] However, as Clear indicated, the influence of expertise may vary according to the particular situation.

Focus of the Study

The present exploratory study hypothesized that in a situation in which a teacher needs assistance with an instructional problem, the factor of expertise will be significant. The specific hypothesis advanced for testing was that the more likely the principal is perceived by teachers as possessing expertise, i.e., special knowledge or skill, the more likely it is that a teacher with an instructional problem will seek the assistance of the principal.

Clear suggested in his report that perhaps one of the reasons why he found no significant difference between the principal and the department head in influencing teachers was that the teachers viewed their colleagues as representing a greater source of expertise than either the principal or the department head. For that reason, the current study also included the teachers' colleagues, as well as the department head and the central office staff, in testing the basic hypothesis on the relationship between perceived expertise and the likelihood that a teacher would seek out an administrator or supervisor for assistance.

It should be pointed out that the researcher recognized from the beginning of the conceptualization of the study that an administrator's perceived expertise might not be the only factor influencing whether another person would seek the administrator's assistance. Consequently, related predictor variables examined in this research were availability of time, personal attractiveness, and responsibility and authority for working with teachers on instructional problems.

Research Design

Sample

The study was conducted in a Wisconsin city of over 700,000 population. Since the study was primarily concerned with teacher perception of the instructional leadership of the high school principal, a 15 per cent sample of the teachers of each of the 15 public high schools in the city was randomly selected from the school district's teacher directory. The total number of teachers invited to take part in the study was 175; approximately 75 per cent participated.

Instrumentation and Procedures

Instrumentation for the study was adapted from the Inventory of Supervisory Functions developed by Eye and his associates. Pre-test and reliability studies resulted in a revised, shortened version of the original instrument. Two forms of the questionnaire were then prepared and mailed, two months apart, to all the teachers in the sample.

The first questionnaire asked the teachers to indicate the likelihood that their principal, their department head, their colleagues, and their central office staff possessed the necessary special knowledge or skills for helping them with certain instructional problems. Teachers were also asked in the first questionnaire about their perceptions of the likelihood that these four potential sources of instructional leadership had been given the responsibility and authority for working with teachers on instructional problems, that they had the available time, and that they represented persons with whom it would be enjoyable to work. In addition, information was collected on each teacher's experience in teaching, his general education, and his academic preparation for classes being taught.

The second questionnaire, which listed the same instructional problems as the first questionnaire, asked the teachers to indicate the likelihood that, if

they had a problem, they would seek help from each of the four potential sources of instructional assistance listed.

A five-point Likert scale ranging from "very unlikely" to "very likely" was used to record the responses. The data were analyzed by multiple regression and mean difference tests.

Findings

The relationship between the perceived expertise of each of the four identified potential sources of instructional leadership and the likelihood that these same sources would be approached by teachers if they needed help is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Pearson Product-Moment Correlations between Expertise, as Perceived by Teachers, and the Likelihood of Being Sought Out for Assistance

Item Description	Principal	Department Head	Teacher Colleagues	Central Office Staff
1. Improve your planning for instruction.	.40	.58	.35	.45
2. Observe your teaching and offer suggestions for improvement.	.58	.56	.38	.54
3. Observe your teaching for purposes of teacher evaluation.	.43	.46	.41	.54
4. Help you select the best textbook for your classroom.	.40	.62	.44	.43
5. Improve your use of supplementary printed materials.	.46	.52	.51	.59
6. Improve your use of audio-visual materials and media.	.38	.44	.37	.60
7. Improve your techniques for evaluating student performance.	.43	.57	.42	.54
8. Improve your use of standardized test information, e.g., I.Q. and achievement test scores.	.50	.50	.28	.45
9. Demonstrate new teaching techniques for you.	.46	.72	.45	.54
10. Suggest ideas for improving your course content.	.47	.62	.49	.50
11. Improve the course sequence and articulation in your subject field.	.55	.57	.29	.52
12. Develop a long-range plan for the improvement of instruction and curriculum in your subject field.	.46	.67	.49	.48
13. Introduce needed subject changes in your subject field.	.50	.63	.47	.61
14. Introduce needed change in the total school program in your school.	.44	.53	.34	.40
TOTAL SCORE CORRELATION	.70	.80	.57	.71

All of the above correlations are significant at the .01 level.

Since all of the item and total-score correlations for each of the four identified potential sources of instructional leadership are significant at the .01 level, as shown in Table 1, the basic hypothesis that a significantly positive relationship exists between perceived expertise and the likelihood that teachers who need help with an instructional problem will approach an administrator or supervisor for assistance received strong confirmation.

The relationship between perceived expertise and the likelihood that an individual's assistance will be sought was sustained whether that individual was the principal, department head, central office staff member, or teacher's colleague. However, looking at the relative differences between item correlations and between total-score correlations, the relationship seemed to be strongest for the department head, followed by central office staff, the principal, and finally, the teachers' colleagues. The department head showed the highest relationship between perceived expertise and the likelihood of being approached for assistance on items 1, 4, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, and 14; the central office staff on items 3, 5, and 6; the principal on item 2; and the teachers' colleagues on no items. On item 8, the principal and the department head tied for the highest relationship.

Although perceived expertise was hypothesized as the central predictor variable which would be associated with the likelihood that a teacher would approach any of the four identified potential sources of instructional leadership, it was recognized that other variables might also play a role. The perceived available time of each of the four potential sources of instructional leadership, their perceived personal attractiveness, the likelihood that each of them had been given the responsibility of working with teachers on the items identified on the questionnaire, and the likelihood that each of them had been given the authority for working with teachers on the items identified on the

questionnaire might, in addition to perceived expertise, affect the possibility that a teacher would approach any of the four sources of assistance.

The total-score relationship between the criterion variable and these four additional predictor variables is presented in Table 2.*

Table 2. Total-Score Relationship between Other Selected Predictor Variables and the Dependent Variable

	Available Time	Personal Attractiveness	Responsibility	Authority
Principal	.35	.40	.12	.02
Department Head	.20	.54	.37	.21
Teachers' Colleagues	.28	.38	.30	.18
Central Office Staff	.30	.59	.21	.20

Correlations at or above .17 are significant at the .05 level.
Correlations at or above .23 are significant at the .01 level.

Table 2 reveals that, with the exception of two cases, the hypothesized relationship between the four additional predictor variables and the likelihood that a teacher with an instructional problem would approach each of the four sources of instructional leadership for assistance was confirmed. The two exceptions were the perceived responsibility and the perceived authority of the principal to help a teacher with an instructional problem. Apparently the principal's perceived available time and his personality are more important to teachers than his perceived responsibility or authority for helping them with instructional problems.

Generally the data presented in Table 2 indicate that the more likely the teachers perceived the principal, department head, colleagues, or the central office staff as possessing the available time to help them, as someone with whom

*Item scores were not obtained for the additional predictor variables because of the need to keep the length of the questionnaire within reasonable bounds.

they would personally enjoy working, and as someone who had been given the respnsibility and authority for working with the, the more likely the teachers were disposed toward approaching each of these four sources of instructional assistance for help with a problem. Compatability of personality seemed to be the most important predictor variable for each of the four sources of instructional assistance; authority, the least. Regardless of the relative importance, however, of each predictor variable in Table 2, the data clearly support the proposition that there are predictor variables, in addition to perceived expertise, which are associated with the likelihood that a teacher would approach each of the four identified sources of instructional leadership for assistance.

Although the investigator was not hopeful of discovering significant relationships between certain characteristics of the teacher respondents and the nature of their responses, data were nevertheless collected on the extent of the teacher's experience in teaching, his length of experience in his present school, his level of education, and the extent of his academic preparation for the classes he taught. The relationship between these four variables and the likelihood that a teacher would approach each of the identified potential sources of instructional leadership is shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Total-Score Relationship between Teachers' Experience and Background, and the Dependent Variable

Source of Assistance	Experience in Teaching	Teaching Experience in Present School	Education	Academic Preparation
Principal	-.01	-.05	-.25	-.15
Department Head	-.07	-.07	-.17	-.07
Teachers' Colleagues	-.12	-.02	-.13	-.14
Central Office Staff	.06	-.17	-.12	-.13

Correlations at or above .17 are significant at the .05 level.
Correlations at or above .23 are significant at the .01 level.

Only three of the correlations in Table 3 are significant. There is a strong negative relationship (at the .05 level) between the length of a teacher's experience in his present school and the likelihood that the teacher would approach the central office staff for assistance with an instructional problem. There is also a significant negative relationship between the educational level achieved by a teacher and the likelihood that he would approach either the principal for assistance (.01 level) or the department head (.05 level). While the other correlations are not significant, it is worth emphasizing that almost all of them suggest a negative relationship. In other words, the greater the extent of a teacher's experience, education, and academic preparation, the less likely he felt disposed toward approaching any of the four sources of instructional leadership. This tendency was strongest in regard to the teacher variables of level of education achieved and academic preparation.

Despite the inferences one might make in regard to the significance of the related predictor variables identified in Tables 2 and 3, Table 4 shows that by comparison, perceived expertise appears to be the most important factor influencing the likelihood that a teacher would approach each of the four sources of instructional assistance.

Table 4. Total-Score Correlations between Each Predictor Variable and the Dependent Variable, for Each of the Four Sources of Instructional Leadership

Source of Assistance	Perceived Expertise	Available Time	Personal Attractiveness	Responsibility	Authority	Teaching Experience	Exp. in Present School	Level of Educ.	Academic Preparation
Principal	.70	.35	.40	.12	-.02	-.01	-.05	-.25	-.15
Department Head	.80	.20	.54	.37	.21	-.07	-.07	-.17	-.07
Teachers' Colleagues	.57	.28	.38	.30	.18	-.12	-.02	-.13	-.14
Central Office Staff	.71	.30	.59	.21	.20	.06	.17	-.12	-.13

Correlations at or above .17 are significant at the .05 level.
Correlations at or above .23 are significant at the .01 level.

The data presented in Table 4 indicate that for each of the four identified potential sources of instructional leadership -- the principal, the department head, the central office staff, and the teachers' colleagues -- perceived expertise is more strongly associated with the likelihood that an administrator or supervisor will be approached for assistance by a teacher with an instructional problem than is any other factor. Perceived available time, personal attractiveness, responsibility, and authority generally are significant variables in regard to the likelihood that a teacher will seek the assistance of each of the sources of instructional leadership, but perceived expertise seems to be the most important factor.

In order to more accurately ascertain the relative importance of perceived expertise, versus the four other predictor variables generally found to be significantly associated with the likelihood that a teacher would seek assistance from each of the identified sources of instructional leadership, a partial correlation analysis was conducted, the results of which are presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Total-Score Pearson Product-Moment Correlations and Partial Correlations between Perceived Expertise and the Likelihood of Being Perceived as a Source of Instructional Assistance

Source of Assistance	PPM Correlations	Partial Correlations (Related Predictor Variables Statistically Controlled)			
	Expertise	Available Time	Personal Attractiveness	Responsibility	Authority
Principal	.70	.65	.63	.70	.70
Department Head	.80	.79	.71	.77	.79
Teachers' Colleagues	.57	.52	.48	.52	.55
Central Office Staff	.71	.68	.53	.70	.70

Correlations at or above .17 significant at the .05 level.
Correlations at or above .23 significant at the .01 level.

The partial correlations represented in Table 5 show that there is a strong and significant association between perceived expertise and the likelihood that each of the four identified sources of instructional leadership will be approached by a teacher for help with an instructional problem, even when perceived available time, compatability of personality, responsibility, and authority are separately held constant.* By comparing the size of the Pearson Product-Moment correlations between perceived expertise and the criterion variable, and the partial correlations for the same relationship, it can be seen that generally the reduction in the strength of the relationships as a result of removing the influence of the other significant predictor variables is slight. With only one exception (the influence of the factor of personal attractiveness on the primary relationship between the perceived expertise of the central office staff and the criterion variable), the most that the main relationship is reduced for any of the sources of instructional leadership is nine points.

This finding can be contrasted with the results of a partial correlation analysis which investigated the importance of the other predictor variables when perceived expertise was statistically parcelled out. In the case of the PPM correlation between perceived compatability of personality of the central office staff and the likelihood that a teacher would approach the central office staff for assistance (.59, which was the highest correlation for predictor variables other than perceived expertise), the reduction was 43 points to a partial correlation of .16, which was not significant at the .05 level. The reduction of the PPM correlation between perceived compatability of the personality

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*Computer breakdown and time limitations have made it impossible up to this point to ascertain the cumulative effects of statistically controlling for the other predictor variables.

of the principal and the dependent variable (.40) was 29 points, down to a partial correlation of .11, which also failed to reach significance at the .05 level.

Considering the high independent association between perceived expertise and the dependent variable, and the debilitating effect exerted by perceived expertise when parcelled out of the relationship between the other predictor variables and the criterion variable, the evidence points strongly to the primary importance of perceived expertise as a basis for any administrator or supervisor who expects to exert instructional leadership.*

Relative Distribution of Perceived Expertise

If expertise is the most important characteristic that a principal, department head, central office staff member, or a teacher's colleague should be perceived as possessing if he wants to be sought out for assistance in solving instructional problems, to what extent is each of these sources of instructional leadership actually perceived to possess this essential qualification? Table 6 gives the item and total-score means on perceived expertise for each of the four sources of instructional leadership.**

An examination of Table 6 will show that the teachers in the study perceived the department head as possessing the most expertise for helping them with their instructional problems, followed by the teachers' own

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*Since the gain in predictor value which could be achieved from combining all of the significant predictor variables into a multiple regression correlation was only four to six points, this type of analysis was not judged to be useful for inclusion in the paper.

**Problems referred to earlier precluded an item-by-item mean difference analysis.

Table 6. Item and Total-Score Means for the Perceived Expertise of Each of the Four Sources of Instructional Leadership

Item Description	Principal	Department Head	Teachers' Colleagues	Central Office Staff
1. Improve your planning for instruction.	2.65	3.85	3.87	3.25
2. Observe your teaching and offer suggestions for improvement.	3.24	3.62	3.87	3.32
3. Observe your teaching for purposes of teacher evaluation.	3.91	3.57	2.70	3.21
4. Help you select the best textbook for your classroom.	2.08	3.96	3.99	3.42
5. Improve your use of supplementary printed materials.	2.49	3.93	3.82	3.52
6. Improve your use of audio-visual materials and media.	2.53	3.71	3.68	3.29
7. Improve your techniques for evaluating student performance.	2.73	3.44	3.56	3.03
8. Improve your use of standardized test information, e.g., I.Q. and achievement test scores.	3.05	3.19	3.02	3.12
9. Demonstrate new teaching techniques for you.	2.35	3.29	3.66	3.35
10. Suggest ideas for improving your course content.	2.43	3.89	3.69	3.51
11. Improve the course sequence and articulation in your subject field.	2.41	3.63	3.36	3.49
12. Develop a long-range plan for the improvement of instruction and curriculum in your subject field.	2.50	3.62	3.35	3.84
13. Introduce needed subject changes in your subject field.	2.55	3.69	3.52	3.53
14. Introduce needed change in the total school program in your school.	3.95	3.25	3.18	3.29
TOTAL-SCORE CORRELATION	2.78	3.62	3.47	3.37

colleagues, then the central office staff, and finally, the principal. The department head was perceived as possessing the most expertise for assisting a teacher on items 5, 6, 8, 10, 11, 12, 13, and 14; the teachers' colleagues, on items 1, 2, 4, 7, and 9; the principal, on item 3; and the central office staff on none of the items. However, the central office staff was perceived as possessing more expertise than the principal on 11 of the 14 items. The principal was perceived as possessing the least expertise, as compared to the other three identified potential sources of instructional leadership, on

10 of the 14 items on the questionnaire.

Table 7 shows the extent to which there were relative differences between the total-score perceived expertise of the four sources of instructional leadership.

Table 7. Significance of Total-Score Mean Expertise Differences Between Each of the Four Identified Sources of Instructional Leadership

Source	Mean	S. D.	Source	Mean	S. D.	Mean Differences	Probability of a Difference
Principal	2.78	.77	Department Head	3.62	.88	-.84	.01
Principal	2.78	.77	Teachers' Colleagues	3.47	.78	-.69	.01
Principal	2.78	.77	Central Office Staff	3.37	.93	-.59	.01
Department Head	3.62	.88	Teachers' Colleagues	3.47	.78	.15	N.S.
Department Head	3.62	.88	Central Office Staff	3.37	.93	.25	.01
Teachers' Colleagues	3.47	.78	Central Office Staff	3.37	.93	.10	N.S.

As one can see from examining Table 7, the differences between the perceived expertise of the principal and the other three sources of instructional leadership are all significant at the .01 level. There seems little doubt but that the teachers in this study perceived the principal as possessing significantly less expertise for helping them with their instructional problems than the other three identified sources of assistance.

Regarding the other sources of instructional assistance, Table 7 shows that teachers perceived the department head as possessing significantly more expertise for helping them with instructional problems than either the principal

or the central office staff. These differences were significant at the .01 level. Although the mean difference in perceived expertise between the department head and the teachers' colleagues did not achieve the pre-established criterion for significance, i.e., the .05 level, the difference approached significance and was in the same direction as the other mean differences between the department head and the other sources of instructional assistance. Therefore, the data in general would appear to support the conclusion that the department head was perceived as possessing significantly more expertise than any other source of instructional assistance identified in the study.

The other data reported in Table 7 show that the teachers' colleagues, as well as the central office staff, were perceived as possessing significantly more expertise than the principal for assisting teachers with instructional problems, but not more than the department head, and not significantly more than each other. However, it should be noted that the teachers perceived their own colleagues as possessing the second highest amount of expertise -- next to the department head -- of the four sources of instructional leadership that were identified.

Limitations of the Study

Before discussing the findings or stating conclusion and implications, it should be emphasized that this study is characterized by several limitations of which the reader needs to be aware. The extent to which the limitations identified may be important will be discussed briefly, but the reader is generally left to draw his own conclusions.

Although all studies have limitations, and the traditional caveats concerning the nature of the sample, etc., apply to this investigation as well, the following factors should be mentioned specifically:

1. Instructional leadership in this study is defined by the items and the format of the questionnaire. To some observers, this concept of instructional leadership may seem narrow and restricted. It is conceded that the desired length of the questionnaire and the assumption that expertise would be most significant in instructional leadership in relation to the likelihood that a teacher would approach someone for assistance, limited the operational definition of instructional leadership in the study.
2. The four potential sources of instructional leadership identified for the teachers were the principal, the department head, the teachers' colleagues, and the central office staff. One might have included additional sources of instructional leadership, such as parents or students, but the four selected were judged to offer the most potential for improving instruction. It should also be noted that the terms, "central office staff" and "teacher colleagues" are not as precise or definitive as one might desire. In the case of the former, perhaps "central office supervisor" would have been a better term to use in the questionnaire.
3. Data were collected on the perceptions of teachers in regard to the expertise, available time, personal attractiveness, responsibility, and authority of each of the four identified sources of instructional leadership. No attempt was made or contemplated to ascertain the "actual" expertise, available time, etc. of the four sources of leadership. It was assumed that the teachers would be more influenced in their responses by their perceptions of the characteristics of the sources of leadership than by the actual characteristics, whatever they may have been.

4. The item and total-score correlations between perceived expertise and the likelihood that a teacher would seek assistance from each of the four sources of instructional leadership may have been affected by the fact that the teachers answered the same questionnaire (with a different set of instructions) in regard to their perceptions of expertise and the likelihood that they would seek help from each of the four sources of instructional assistance. It is therefore possible that the correlations were inflated by the teachers' set to respond in a similar way to the questionnaire on the second time it was administered. However, to reduce this potential tendency, the items of the second questionnaire were placed in a different order than on the first questionnaire. The four sources of instructional assistance were also listed differently on the second questionnaire. Finally, the two questionnaires were administered approximately two months apart. But in spite of these precautions, it is possible that the correlations in the study are spurious to some extent.
5. Although perceived available time, personal attractiveness, responsibility, and authority were variables also investigated in the study, the researcher did not experience great success in operationally defining these terms -- particularly the latter two. In the case of "responsibility" and "authority," the teachers were simply asked to state the likelihood that each source of instructional leadership had been given (1) the responsibility and (2) the authority for helping them in the areas specified in the questionnaire. It is entirely possible that teachers responded to this part of the questionnaire with different conceptions of the terms "responsibility" and "authority." This problem was anticipated, but no solutions were

found that could be reasonably incorporated into the survey instrument.

Conclusions and Implications

The findings of this study must, of course, be interpreted within the limitations referred to in the previous section.

However, accepting these constraints, the results of the study appear to provide strong support for the importance of expertise as a basis for working with teachers on instructional problems, regardless of whether one is a principal, department head, a teacher's colleague, or a member of the central office staff. Although perceived available time, compatability of personality, responsibility, and authority were, with few exceptions, found to be significantly associated with the criterion variable, only perceived expertise was independently related to the likelihood that a teacher with an instructional problem would approach for assistance each of the four sources of instructional leadership. The latter finding suggests that the central factor which will most likely determine the probability that a teacher with an instructional problem will approach an administrator or supervisor for assistance is the teacher's perception of the expertise of that administrator or supervisor.

While there appeared to be a tendency for teachers with more teaching experience and greater educational background and preparation to be less likely to seek the assistance of each of the four sources of instructional leadership, in only one instance (level of education) was the relationship statistically significant. Therefore, it appears that teaching experience and educational background are not extremely important factors in determining the likelihood that a teacher will seek the help of one of the four sources of instructional assistance.

If, as the data indicate, perceived expertise is the central most important variable in determining the likelihood that a teacher will seek the assistance of another individual (whether that person be a principal, department head, colleague, or a member of the central office staff), then the finding that teachers perceive the principal as least likely and the department head as most likely to possess the instructional expertise to help them is of real import as one considers the current role definitions and training of these two individuals.

As pointed out earlier in the paper, the principalship is looked upon by those who occupy the position, as well as by those who organizationally define its role, as a position of instructional leadership. While it is possible that one can lead without having his leadership sought out, it would appear from the findings of this study that teachers will not seek the leadership of the principal unless he is perceived as possessing expertise. And yet, of the four potential sources of instructional leadership, the principal was perceived as possessing the least degree of expertise for helping teachers with instructional problems.

One implication of this finding is that the principal may need to re-define his role responsibilities. For some time now, many educational observers have been saying that the principal can no longer function as the instructional leader of the school, at least not in a supervisory sense. The results of the current study suggest that this may be true, and that the principal may need to either re-define his role responsibilities or enroll in a retraining program designed to provide him with the expertise he needs.

A second major implication of the data on the relative perceived expertise of the four identified sources of instructional leadership is that the expertise of the department head and the teachers' own colleagues might

be capitalized on more than seems to be occurring in many school districts, since teachers perceived these two sources as possessing more expertise than the sources traditionally designated for providing instructional assistance, i.e., the principal and the central office staff. This might involve only the recognition and encouragement of teachers' colleagues as a legitimate source of instructional assistance. However, in the case of the department heads, it would probably be better to redefine their role, with a new focus on instructional leadership, and to provide them with more released time and a training program to equip them with additional skills and knowledge related to their proposed function in the school.

Finally, one is hesitant to know how to interpret the findings on the central office staff. Although they were perceived as possessing more expertise than the principal on most items of the questionnaire, they were not perceived as possessing as much expertise for helping teachers as were the teachers' own colleagues or the department head. Perhaps the term, "central office staff" was too vague and did not lend itself to an evaluation of expertise. In any regard, the high partial correlation between perceived expertise and the likelihood that a teacher would approach the central office for assistance still points up the importance of the central office staff's possessing or acquiring expertise if they hope to be approached by teachers seeking assistance with their problems.

In summary, the findings from this study strongly support the conclusion that perceived expertise is the primary factor which will determine the probability that a teacher with an instructional problem will approach an administrator or supervisor for assistance. Additional research is needed, however, to determine the extent to which this conclusion can be generalized and to better measure the effects of some of the related predictor variables which were examined in this study.

FOOTNOTES

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3. The Principalship: Job Specifications and Salary Considerations for the 70's. The National Association of Secondary School Principals, 1970, p. 2.

4. J. F. Watkins, "Inquiry into the Staff-Principal Relationship," Journal of Educational Research, LXIII (September, 1969), p. 115.

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7. Delbert K. Clear, "Supervision in an Educational Organization," The Institute of Staff Relations Journal, Spring 1971.

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19. William M. Evans and Morris Zelditch, "A Laboratory Experiment on Bureaucratic Authority," American Sociological Review, XXVI (1961), pp. 883-893.

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